



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

Date: October 2005

To: Michigan's Health Care Workers

Influenza is a viral infection that causes more than 200,000 Americans to be hospitalized and about 36,000 deaths each year in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all health care workers get a yearly flu vaccine. Data from the National Health Interview Survey of 2003 show that only 40% of health care workers received the flu vaccine. By immunizing yourself against the flu, you can protect yourself, your family, and the patients in your care.

Unvaccinated health care workers are a key vehicle for the transmission of influenza in health care settings. Health care workers can spread the virus because they often work while they are ill or just before they become ill. Vaccination of health care workers has been proven to reduce the transmission of influenza and any influenza-related complications that may cause death both for patients and other healthcare workers. Inactivated (i.e., killed virus) influenza vaccine and live, attenuated influenza (intranasal) vaccine are available for use in the United States.

In Michigan, the health care industry is now our largest employer. If every health care team member would become vaccinated against influenza, we could really make a difference in decreasing the burden of this disease within our state.

Protect yourself, your colleagues, and those who trust their care in you. Get vaccinated every year, and encourage your co-workers to do the same!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean Sienko".

Dean Sienko M.D. M.S.
Acting Chief Medical Executive
Michigan Department of Community Health

For more information, see www.cdc.gov/flu or www.michigan.gov/flu